NEGRO SUPERSTITIONS.

Some Curious Things Which Are Belleved by the Southern Blacks. "Did you ever hear of 'picking up tracks?" Congressman John Allen, of tracks?" Congressman John Allen, of Mississippi, asked a group of southern members. It was something new to all

Well," explained Mr. Allen, "it was new to me until a short time before I left home to come here for this extraordinary session of congress. I went into the country visiting some of my people. When I got there I found great excitement prevailing. A young negro woman had been 'picking up tracks,' and it had broken up one family. Everybody was afraid. Nobody knew whose tracks might be picked up next.

"It seems the young woman had a grudge of some kind against a man and a woman. She had followed them and had picked up their tracks.' Then she had gone off and buried the tracks she had picked up. She had put dog's hair with the tracks of the man and eat's hair with the tracks of the woman. After that the man and the woman couldn't livu together any more than a cat and a dog could. They had separated and the whole community was in a state of aproar when I arrived. They were about to send off some thirty miles for a negro preacher. It seemed that he was gifted with the power to break the spell. One woman said she never gave the voodoo woman any chance to pick up her Whenever she saw her coming she sat right down wherever she might be and waited until the voodoo woman was out of sight."

Picking up tracks," continued Mr. Allen, "seems to be a new idea among the negroes. You've heard of people perishing with lizards and snakes under the skin? I had a little experience with a case of that kind. A justice of the peace actually bound a man under one thousand dollars to go before court for putting lizards under the skin of another man. I had the prosecuting witness up in my room, and put him through an examination for the benefit of my fellow-lawyers. The negro had his arms tied tightly with strings. I asked him what that was for, and he said it was to keep the lizards from getting together. He actually believed he could feel the lizards moving about. After a few questions he forgot that he had the lizards confined by the bandages, and told a story that didn't agree with it. He said that whenever he ate anything he could feel the lizards coming down from his shoulders under his chest to his stomach to get their part. I put all kinds of questions to him and couldn't shake his belief in his affliction. That man died of lizards under the skin. Then it was found out that some lizards had been buried at the foot of a tree. If these buried lizards had been discovered earlier the life of the afflicted man could have been saved, but his friends didn't know where the lizards were until it was too late. That was what the negroes said."- St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

## DATING WAY BACK.

The General Got More Credit for Old Age Than He Wanted.

Old Gen. Fodewah takes great delight in being considered a back number. His wife doesn't and whenever the general starts in to indulge in his personal reminiscences she always takes pains to express her doubts of their being veritable personal recollec-

The other evening the general was entertaining a dinner party with tales of the wonderful changes which had taken place in New York during his

He had spoken of the time when Grand street was out in the country. and when he used to live in Mott street and attend Columbia college, then situated in Park place, and was about to clucidate some other points of ancient local history when his wife broke in

Now, Thomas! You are incorrigible. You know all those things happened before you were born! If you go on in that way you will be telling people by and by that you remember when the barge office used to be considered up-town!

But the general's little granddaughter holds a firm and innocent belief in his powers of long-distance memory. After her return from Sunday-school one day she climbed up on his knee

and said to him: Oh. grandpa: you knew about Peter's drawing his sword and cutting off that man's ear, don't you?" The ear of the servant of the high

priest? Why, of course, Bessie. There! That's what I told my teacher! She said it happened a long time ago-before anybody living could remember. And I told her I guessed my grandpa could remember it."-N.

That Shattered Conversation. "Henry," said Mrs. Binkins, "do you

think this will be a hard winter?" "Of course it is," replied Mr. Binkins; freezing makes even the water hard. And Mrs. Binkins silently pondered on what a nice thing it is to have a ud schramble up ivery now and thin smart man for a husband.-Washington Star.

An Offset.

"The wall flower," remarked the philosopher, "is often the only girl in the ballroom who can cook a dinner. "Yes." responded Miss Worldling. "and the girl who dances is the only one who can digest it."- Detroit Free Press.

A Painful Case. Tom-My tailor has agreed to make a suit of clothes for me and not charge me a cent for them.

Dick-You must have struck a snap Tom-Hardly; he says I'll have to pay cash .- Detroit Free Press.

Harold-Bowleigh has joined the kennel club. Percy-Yes? I knew he was going to the dogs. -Judge.

When Baby was sick, we gave her Castoria When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria. When she became Miss, she clung to Castoria. When she had Children, she gave them Casteria



On my second expedition into northern Brazil some years ago, we camped for several weeks on the Rio Branco, about one hundred miles above its the principal confluents of the Amazon.

The rainy season was past, and, although we were almost on the equatorial line, the weather was not unendurably hot, the constantly-blowing eastern trade winds greatly reducing its temperature and rendering our big tent, pitched in the shade of an immense saman tree, a comfortable

Our party consisted of eleven men ten Americans and a newly caught Irishman-"Teddy" O'Brien by name, who more for the sake of "divilment and divarshun" than forty dollars a month, as he had said, had engaged with us as cook. And a truly wonderful cook he was!

However, as we all survived his ingenious experiments in that line, it would, perhaps, be ungrateful to specify them. Anyhow, the fellow earned his salary twice over by an inexhaustible flow of merriment that kept our digestive organs in condition to assimilate the most erratic of his culinary creations.

While some members of our party were amateur botanists, geologists, naturalists or taxidermists, we were all enthusiastic explorers and hunters, and we fairly revoled in the wealth of animal and vegetable life about us.

Our six-ton boat, moored in the river, was fast becoming a museum. Repre senting the country's flora, we had dried plants, shrubs and flowers without end; in the way of reptiles, a stuffed cayman, several striped rattlesnakes, one twelve-foot bos, and a great variety of lizards, while in insects our collection was exceedingly rich. Of the feathered tribe we had almost everything from the mighty condor of the Andes down to minute humming birds; and of fishes-besides a fine electric eel-one or more specimens of near-ly every kind found in the inland waters of the tropics.

Of wild beasts we had already shot and set up the jaguar, red wolf, cougar, peccary, culot, tapir, tiger-cat, wild dog, three kinds of deer, the sloth and armadillo, as well as six varieties of monkeys and a number of other small arboreal creatures.

But there was one amphibious animal, the manatee, and a semi-amphibious reptile, the anaconda, we had not yet obtained. We had seen scores of

We were perfectly concealed from all observation except that of the jeering monkeys, who, looking down on us from their heights, kept up a ceaseless clamor of derisive cries.

For nearly an hour we crouched, watching in motionless attention the pond's surface, seeing a lazily-floating cayman or two, but no sign of the

Directly fronting us, on the east side of the creek, there lay, extended along the water's edge and not more than nine yards away, the fallen trunk of a laurel tree, from which rose several broken and partially decayed branches, the whole being in deep shade, as the sun had not yet risen high enough to fully light that part of the island.

While we were patiently waiting. Alden nudged me and whispered: "See what beautifully variegated moss covers one of those limb stubs. We must gather some of it before we go back to

I was about to make some commonplace reply when, thirty or forty yards south of us, I noticed a slight undulation of the water, and presently there appeared above its surface, first the head and then the back of a full-grown monster, followed immediately by a like emerging of a calf, a comical looking creature not half as long as its mother.

After inhaling air for a half minute or so, the pair sank again, and, as we saw plainly by the ripples, began to feed on bottom-growing plants, along the east shore and directly toward the head of the lagoon.

The next time they rose for air they were twenty yards nearer us than before, and I whispered to Alden: "Wait till they get into the shadow between us and the big log; then, when their heads show, you take the old one and I'll take the youngster, shoot straight for the brain and they'll never know what hurt them." Tom nodded assent and we waited in silence.

The water shoaled so rapidly now that by the time the animals were abreast of us and within two feet of the laurel log the mother's rounded back appeared above the surface, and the little one, raising its hand-like flipper to climb with, scrambled upon it, riding exactly as I have seen the young of an African hippopotamus.

In another moment the old monster lifted her head, and making a sign to my two other companions not to shoot Tom and I quietly thrust our rifle barrels through the bushes, took careful aim, and were about to fire.

That instant, however, Tom's "beau-tifully variegated moss" leaped into sudden life. A flashing streak of black, tawny brown and yellow shot out from the dead branch, and in the twinkling of an eye the calf's muzzle was fast between the recurving fangs of a monstrous anaconda.



THE CALF'S MUZZLE WAS FAST IN THE RECURVED FANGS OF A MONSTROUG ANACONDA

the first while ascending the river, but had never secured one, though it is a somewhat sluggish creature, and not at all difficult of approach, as it feeds upon aquatic plants at the bottom of still water and comes frequently to the surface to breath.

One evening we were bemoaning our bad luck in this respect when Teddy observed: "An' is it the quare baste that's a cross bechune a mermaid an' a fish that ve're afther wantin? Faix it's meself can put ye ahn to the craythur thin in no time."

"All right, Teddy. Let's have your plan," said Tom Alden.

"It's aisier nor rowlin' down hill, me bhye. Up beyont there's what ye call a lagoon, an' the far ind av it runs up loike a lake intil them thick woods. Shure it's not tin shteps acrass; an' be the same token Oi seen a big manmanistee is it; an a good lump av a young wan frolickin' round there bright an airly this same blissid morn in'. The water in thim parts is moighty shoal, I'm thinkin', whin the old baste was feedin' ahn the bottom, the baby an' roost ahn her back, kapin' its own wee paddle av a tail in the wather, koind of soshible loike. Sorra bit av thruble for some av yez to consale yersilves ahn both sides av the lane an' bag the two crarthurs"

Teddy's idea seeming a good one, at I -St. Louis Republic. lay break next morning four of us, taking our rifles, a barbed grappling iron and a coil of rope, set off for the lagoon, a grass-grown stretch of stagpant water lying parallel to the river, and at the nearer end about a half mile from our camp.

Just as Teddy had said, we found its further or northern extremity to consist of a narrow creek, and this was closely bordered on both sides by water palms, gum, rubber, saman trees and gigantic tree-ferns, with a dense undergrowth of bushes, while, running through all, reaching to and binding together the loftiest tree-tops, was a wondrous network of lians vines amidst which, when we arrived, in-numerable monkeys were just begin-

ning their morning sports. With some difficulty our quartette, comprising Tom Alden, two other men and myself, gained the westward margin of the watery lane, where we enconced ourselves in the matted brushwood, deeming it imprudent to take opposite sides for fear of accidents in possible crossfiring.

Then while the helpless creature rolled off its mother's back, there was a gleaming whirl of circling rings, a cyclone of concentrative coils, a churning of the center into foam, and almost before we could realize the start. ling scene, the mighty serpent had crushed the life out of its prey.

But as the reptile compressed its overlapping folds tighter and tighter, two simultaneously fired bullets shattered its flat head, and its great length, slowly uncoiling, straightened along the blood stained surface of the

Apparently paralyzed by fright, the nother still stood with her head above water, staring at the floating serpent and her dead calf. One of us, with more presence of mind than the rest, put the beast out of misery by a shot through the brain.

Thus, most unexpectedly, we had killed at one time the several specimens we

were anxious to obtain. Leaving our rifleman to dispose of these-an easy task with his repeater -the other three of us forced our way round the head of the creek to the laurel log, and, by the aid of grapnel and rope, towed the carcasses a little way down the east side and hauled them upon a projecting sandbar, where they could be readily reached by boat.

> Eseful Tres. Oh. woodman, spare that tree, I pray you let it stand, A refuge it may be

When the buildog is at hand. The Reporting Style.

City Editor-Mr. Scribbler, you will have to be a little more careful in your style of writing up local occurrences. Reporter-Why, what's the matter? City Editor-In reporting the toasts

at that public dinner you say: "The mayor of the city and ladies, etc., were appropriately drunk, and the party separated in fine cheer."-Texas Sift-

Cashing a Check.

Bingo-Did you have any trouble in eashing that cheek I gave you! Mrs. Bingo-No, indeed. I took it right to my milliner.

Mrs. Bingo-Gracious, no! She gave me the loveliest bounet you ever saw. FEMININE SMOKERS

A Practice That Is Growing in Favor with the Fair Sex.

Royal Russian Women Who are Very Fond of Their Cigarettes-A Peculiar Custom of Kalmuck Mothers Smoking Infants.

A brisk controversy has been going on about cigarette-smoking women in the columns of the North American Review and other periodicals, and those who broke lances for and against were women. Mrs. Lynn Lynton, phose novels are read here as femilletons so extensively and with so much gusto, is quoted as leading the assault against the lady smokers. Is it true that she calls the cigarette when in a lady's mouth the emblem of revolt? If so, she is not up to date, so far as continental practices go. The cigarette has not yet found its way with after-dinner coffee into the official drawing-room, but it soon will. At all the houses setting up to style it is served at intimate dejeuners and small but lively dinners.

Nobody is shocked at ladies smoking not merely one cigarette apiece but two or three. A minister of Queen Christina says that highly respectable and respected royal lady is an inveterate and a veteran smoker. She got in the habit of smoking a cigarette when she was abbess of the Hradschin, a sinecure she lost on getting married. Her cousin, Archduchess Mathilde, who was engaged to King Humbert when he was prince of Savoy, lost her life owing to her fondness for cigarettes. She was forbidden by her father, Archduke Albert, to smoke, but none the less went on doing so. One summer's day, or evening, as she was standing smoking on the balcony she saw him enter the courtvard on which she was looking down. The archduchess, who was wearing a muslin dress, whipped the cigarette out of her mouth and hid it behind her back. It came in contact with the muslin, and she was in a moment enveloped in flames, there being a strong draught where she stood.

Most of the Russian grand duch-esses are smokers. Grand Duchess Wlademir thinks a husband and wife who smoke are less likely to fall out than if the former alone smoked. It is not known whether the queen of Italy smokes, but some of her ladies certainly do. When I was at Stresa I saw them enjoying cigarettes when boating on the lake, and in the grounds of the duchess of Genoa's villa, where the queen was staying. The crown princess of Saxe-Meiningen could not live without her eigarette. It neither takes from her good looks, nor spoils her teeth, nor diminishes her activity. She is nearly thirty-four, but appears scarcely twenty-six. The Infanta Eulalia spoke when she was last on the Riviera of the comtesse de Paris as having set her an example as a smoker. As the French say, the infanta a beaucoup d'imagination, and saw in the eigarette or eigar of the comtesse a pipe which she believed that royal lady smoked in the streets of Seville. Spanish ladies are gratuitously credited or discredited with being great smokers. They may do so in Cuba, though they are there more conservative and greater sticklers for the proprieties than at Madrid. The ladies who best patronize tobacconists are, next to the Kalmucks, the Russians. The ruling passions of Kalmuck women are ribbons to twist round their long tresses, tea, tobacco, and bright handkerchiefs. But if they have to choose between tobacco and tea their option is for the former.

When a little Kalmuck comes into the world-an event that happens rarely twice in the same menage, the mamma is given a well-filled pipe to smoke before she nurses the baby The little one takes to smoking before it is weaned. The pipe is the great cure for nervous headache. Fredeusborg, where the ezar and ezarina sum mer, is the dullest place in the world. The queen of Denmark is exacting of respect for the proprieties. The last charge that anyone could think of bringing against her court is that of fast behavior. Yet most of the young and youngish ladies there are smokers. There is no better way of showing off pretty hands and rings than toying with a cigarette. A court party from Fredensborg one evening was dining at the Copenhagen Trivoli in the colonnade of the restaurant. There was a large threatrical party near them; the actresses did not smoke, but the ladies in attendance and those whom they attended did. Some of the fair smokers were Russians, and not in the least inclined to unfurl the flag of revolt. That evening it was learned that the crown princess of Saxe-Meiningen is not the only granddaughter of Queen Victoria who finds a soluce in the cigarette. Why should not a princess use it, as an old Irish woman uses the pipe to take the edge off nervousness? The only harm is in the abuse. But there is no good thing under the sun that is not mischievous if taken in excess. There is no more harm in mild smoking than in mild tes drinking. George Sand, who lived the age of seventy-three and was so active and hard-working the end, smoked cigarettes and cigars-and in excess. The

Fir Stronger Than Oak. It would be difficult, says the St. Louis Republic, to convince the average man that fir is a stronger wood than oak, but such has been proven by actual tests that were made by a fair and impartial committee appointed for that purpose. The timbers used were each 2x4 inches and 4 feet long, both low fir stood a strain of 3,062 pounds, common Oregon oak, 2.923 pounds. Fine-grained yellow fir from near the butt stood a strain of 3,635 pounds and best Michigan oak snapped with a strain of only 2,428 pounds. The tests were made by the Northern Pacific Railway company at Tacoma, Wash. Old London Bridge.

New London bridge was opened in 1831. Old London bridge was a mon-strosity. It dated back to the year 1167 A. D., and at least three wooden bridges are known to have occupied the same site prior to that date. The old bridge was slightly over nine hundred feet in length, and had eighteen solid stone piers, varying in thickness from twen-ty-five to thirty-four feet, thus confining the flow of the river to less than half its natural channel. The entire surface of the bridge was occupied by blocks of brick and stone buildings (erected on arches, with the roadway running tunnel-like beneath), some of them four stories high. All of these bridge buildings were densely packed with human beings (at one time estimated at seventeen hundred), carrying on all the trades and other vocations of life. Spanning the two center piers was a huge church building dedicated to sSt. Thomas of Canterbury, but usually styled "St. Peter's of the Bridge." In very early time the arch opening from the bridge toward the city was called "Traitor's Gate," and it was no unusual thing to see the heads of a dozen executed criminals hanging

The Origin of Starcning. The course of history carries us back no further than the year 1564 for the origin of starching in London. It was in that year that Mrs. Van der Plasse came with her husband from Flanders to the English metropolis "for their greater safety," and there professed herself a starcher. The best housewives of the time were not long in discovering the excellent whiteness of "Dutch linen," as it was called, and Mrs. Plasse soon had plenty of good-paying elients. Some of these began to send her ruffs of lawn to starch, which she did so excellently well that it became a saving that if anyone sent her a ruff made of a spider's-web she would be able to starch it. So greatly did her reputation grow that fashionable dames went to her to learn the art and mystery of starching, for which they gladly paid a premium of four pounds or five pounds, and for the secret of seething starch they paid gladly a further sum of twenty shillings. -N. Y. World.

Gypsy Biolike for Churches. Gypsies have no religion and some of them have so strong an aversion to churches that they never pass by one without a muttered curse. In European countries they never suffer themselves to be buried in a churchyard, but, whenever allowed, they bury their dead in out-of-the-way places. This antipathy to churches and religious forms is supposed by some persons to have originated from their persecution by the priesthood in the middle ages, but, whatever its origin, it is a fixed fact.-N. Y. Sun.

A Dry Well.

Train Robber-Come! shell out! Rural Minister (sadly)-If I had such energetic fellows as you to pass the plate now and then I might have some thing to give you .- N. Y. Weekly.

A Great Difference. Teacher-How many feet are there in a perch?

Boy-Do you mean the one I caught or the one that got away?-Good

When the hunter returns from the Piatte, With his stories of killing down patte, Don't envy his luck, Or believe all the truck.

For he's talking at you through his hatte.

-Omaha World-Herald. Comparison.

Mary-You call him a beast. What kind of a one? Kitty (who has been bored)-A wolf I should say. He's so difficult to keer

from the door .- Harper's Bazar. Beginning Early. Four-Year-Old Jessie - Dear me

There's the door bell again! If it's anybody that wants to see me, Bridget, just tell 'em I ain't at home.—Chicago

A Measure of Revenge. Gladys-Oh, but I just hate that Mr. Masterys!

Genevieve-Why don't you marry him, then?-Chicago Record. And He Did.

"I am now," croaked the parrot, 114 North Main Street. reaching for its mistress' costly bonnet, "about to put in a bill for damages."-Chicago Tribune.

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clothes with soap. First you Rub Out rub the soap in; that's work in itself. Then you rub it all out again over the washboard. If you're strong and healthy, and rub hard enough, CHAS. I.AWRENCE, you may get the dirt all out, too. It's hard

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Bingo-What did she do; give you jutely safe. It's just as much so as any good soap. Beware "this is as good as "or "the same as Pearline." IT'S FALSE—Pearline is never paddled, if your gracer sends and imitation, be honest more if back and some unsurprised in the same as Pearline." IT'S IAMES PYCE. New York.

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